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ABSTRACT

A search of ERIC literature was undertaken in order to assess research on educational needs. A set of ERIC descriptors was selected, and criteria for evaluation of each abstract established. Approximately 1800 abstracts were retrieved; 150 survided the first screening and 75 the second. Priorities were then assigned to decide which documents should be retrieved. A list of the priority documents is appended with a matrix of their contents and value. (SK)

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ERIC LITERATURE SEARCH ON NEEDS ASSESSMENT*

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Educational information systems have been of great assistance both in improving the quality of service and in saving valuable time which otherwise would have to be spent at research. Educational Resources Information Center (commonly known as ERIC) is invaluable in attempting to grasp the present state of any question in educational research - especially for the following research on needs assessment.

Through Dr. Lee G. Burchinal and Dr. James Eller of the National Center for Educational Communication in Washington, QUERY - the computerized ERIC data base - has been installed at the Mitre Corporation for dissemination by the Merrimack Education Center. In addition to being of massive assistance for the research on needs assessment, MEC has also utilized this service in order to disseminate information on bilingual education, individualized instruction and management information systems. This data base also plays a significant role in MEC's projected plans for disseminating information to targets where a felt need has already been ascertained.

Needs Assessment is the most critical area both in educational planning and knowledge utilization. Nevertheless, it is impossible to respond to real needs without adequate information and facilities. The possibilities of ERIC, especially with its QUERY data base, present great hope of meeting this need.

*Adapted from the report of the Massachusetts Needs Assessment Task Force

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ERIC LITERATURE SEARCH ON NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA

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In initiating an ERIC search pertaining to needs assessment, it first was necessary to arrive at a set of descriptors in order to limit the search. There was no descriptor labelled "need assessment." As a result, this concept was translated into other terms such as "educational needs," "educational planning," "educational change," "educational innovation," and "school planning." Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems (PPBS), although related to the overall scope of the project, was de-emphasized because its primary focus is not on needs assessment and because the Task Force is familiar with this particular management tool.

After selection of the descriptors, MEC conducted a trial manual search through the 1970 issues of Research in Education, the periodical which contains information on the literature deposited in the ERIC data base. EDCO conducted another trial search, using the on-line DIALOGUE retrieval capability, which provided additional insights on search strategy. This capability was made available to the Task Force through the National Center for Educational Communication, USOE.

The results of the trial searches convinced the Task Force that it was worth the investment to conduct a computer-aided off-line QUERY search from the beginning of ERIC (1966) through 1970. This search was conducted by MITRE and MEC without cost to the project because a computerized copy of the ERIC data base and the QUERY retrieval capability were made available to MEC and installed at MITRE's Computer Facility. Installation and checkout were borne by the USOE and MEC.

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At the conclusion of the QUERY search, information had been retrieved on approximately 1800 abstracts which appeared to be of relevance to the project. The next step was to reduce this enormous number of abstracts to a reasonable size. Thus, the Task Force established a set of criteria and evaluated each abstract in terms of its ability to meet one or more of the following:

(1) indications that the scope of the needs assessment approach documented was broad enough to cover various types of problems;

(2) indications that the focus of the need assessment approach being reported had a focus that centered on improving the quality of educational services delivered;

(3) indications that the needs assessment approach reflected a high degree of validity and precision, and that it was sufficiently objective to allow valid data analysis;

(4) indications that the approach used in the study would be useful in setting priorities and in improving the rationale for decisions made in regard to resource allocation and planning;

(5) indications that the approach was extensive enough to accommodate different points of view;

(6) indications that the approach being reported would reinforce previously implemented needs assessment exercises;

(7) indications that the approach would be useful in the identification of emerging future needs;

(8) indications that the approach was linked to a design and/or to a process of planned change;

(9) indications that the length of time it took to develop and implement the approach was reasonable in terms of the results achieved: and

(10) indications that the costs associated with developing and implementing the approach were reasonable in terms of the results achieved.

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Approximately 150 abstracts survived this screening. After some discussion, the members of the team developed an even greater familiarity with the task, and reduced the number to 75. These were next placed into one of three categories of priority for action.

Priority 1

> Retrieve document; abstract indicates that study reported is incisive in its discussion of needs assessment and/or planning, and/or describes an apparently feasible needs assessment technique.

Priority 2

> Do not retrieve document; abstract indicates study reported has some attributes as those in above category, but the techniques are already well understood or sufficiently described in the abstract.

Priority 3

> Defer retrieval of document; abstract indicates that study relates to special interests in needs assessment but is not of immediate value.

Microfiche films for the first category were obtained, enlarged into hard copy and analyzed. The titles which were assigned either a Priority 2 or a Priority 3 rating are attached.

In conclusion, the Task Force considered the search worth the effort. However, the exercises revealed a number of insights which would make future searches less laborious and more cost-effective. For instance, more relevant descriptors (needs assessment) would have facilitated search effectiveness. With the exception of simulation (the relevant articles here were also listed under "educational planning"), techniques applicable to needs assessment were not among the descriptors. Also, reorganization of the ERIC data base and modifications to the QUERY program and user manual would cut retrieval time and costs.

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Upon final reflection, the search could have been initially limited to three descriptors: educational needs, educational innovation, and educational planning. This would have yielded at least 1500 documents. The contents of many of the abstracts were not pertinent to the task while others lacked the necessary quality to be utilized in this study. Future improvements in data quality and in retrieval system design, some of which are being considered by USOE, would certainly facilitate the search task and significantly lower the cost.

PRIORITY DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN THE ERIC DATA BASE

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ED 011761 Looking Ahead to Better Education in Missouri. A report on organization, structure and financing of schools and junior colleges.

ED 014360 Planning At The Grass Roots.

ED 014662 Experimental Explorations in Programmed Instruction and Objective Testing Measures. Report of the "Variables Influencing Behavior."

ED 017685 Curricula Needs of North Bay Schools.

ED 018008 Cooperative Planning for Education in 1980 -- Objectives, Procedures, and Priorities.

ED 018325 Planning for Educational Innovation in a Rural State.

ED 018509 A Survey of the Educational Needs of Santa Clara County.

ED 018865 Long Range Planning for Public Schools. Presenting an Outline to Indicate Scope of Long Range Development Program.

ED 019737 Planning and Implementing Change in Ontario Schools. A report of the committee on the implementation of change in the classroom.

ED 020571 An Analysis of the Rationale and Procedures for Long-Range Planning -- Found in Selected Dor. Enterprises, Govt. Agencies or Dept. and School Systems -- Which are Appropriate for Educ. and Adm. Planning in Local Sch. Sys.

ED 021338 Cooperative Project for Educational Development.

ED 026741 From Research to Development to Use.

ED 027394 A Study to Identify Educational Needs of Non-College Bound Students in a Rural Public High School of Six Hundred Students.

ED 027633 An Operational Application of the Stufflebeam-Guba Cipp Model for Evaluation.

ED 028113 The Center for Study of Educational Innovations. A statement of intent. Current and future projects.

ED 029382 The Use of Computer Simulation Techniques in Educational Planning.

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ED 030985 Identifying and Formulating Educational Problems.

ED 036018 Selected Bibliography on Mathematics for the Blind.

ED 038743 Brainstorm. A sub-project assessing ed. needs as perceived by school staff. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038744 Speak-Up. A sub-project assessing ed. needs as perceived by the Community. Project design. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038745 Student "Speak-Up." A sub-project assessing educational needs as perceived by secondary students. Project design. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038747 Analysis of Achievement. Project design. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038748 Problems Perecived by Ed. Leadership. Project design. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038767 Conclusions from Needs Assessment Publications. Project design. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038768 Summary Fresno Ed. Needs Assessment. Project design. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038769 The Process of Ed. Planning. Project design. Interagency planning for urban ed. needs.

ED 038740 The First Step in Ed. Problem Solving -- A Systematic Assessment of Student Benefits.

ED 039631 Determining Ed. Needs. An Overview.

ED 039749 Systems Analysis in Ed.

ED 041351 Citizens for the 21st Century. Long-range considerations for California Elementary and Secondary Education.

ED 041357 A Survey of the Decision Processes and Related Informational Requirements for Educational Requirements for Educational Planning and Innovation.

ED 041389 Comprehensive Planning for School Districts.

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MATRIX

OF

PRIORITY DOCUMENTS

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ERIC Retrieval No.	Objectives	Focus	Means of Collecting Data	Implemented? Yes	Implemented? No	Needs Identified
ED 011 761	Determine SEA Needs	Assessment of Current Practices	° Interaction of Task Force of National Educators Interviews Conferences	X		° Reorganized/ Expand Role of SEA ° Statutory Changes ° Increased Budget ° Statewide Achievment Testing
ED 014 360	Determine Where Focus of Planning Initiative Should Be	Assessment of Local, Regional & National Involvement in Planning	° Analysis of Existing Documentation		X	° Planning Process Based on Local, Regional and National Participation
ED 014 662	Investigate, Analyze and Experiment with Methods and Tools for Studying Impact of Future Trends in Education	° Determination of "Wants" of Selected Croups ° Determination of Future Roles for Educators	° Survey of Current Forecasting Methods ° Contextual Mapping ° Survey of Mathematical Models for Planning		X	° Philosophy to Guide Policy and Planning Decisions ° Establishment of Educational Policy Research Centers
ED 017 685	° Assess Curricular Objectives ° Determine Curricular Needs of 4 Calif. Counties	° Development of Priorities for Program Development	° Questionnaires to 90 School Administrators	X		° Increased Emphasis on Affective Learning ° Expansion of Vocational Training, Social Studies, Home Economics ° Increased Emphasis on Synthesizing and Evaluating Knowledge

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ERIC Retrieval No.	Objectives	Focus	Means Collecting Data	Implemented? Yes	Implemented? No	Needs Identified
ED 018 008	Characterize Trends that may Shape Emerging (through 1980) Educational Needs	° Improvement of Long-Range Planning for Education	° Analysis of Current/ Future Trends		X	° Improved/Cooperative Planning ° Structuring Productive Context ° Better Planning Data ° Better, More Alternatives ° Earlier "Sensitivity" to Anticipated Change ° Instill Awareness of Need for Planned Change
ED 018 325	Conduct Inventory of Innovative Practices	° Non-Disruptive Introduction of Innovative Practices in Vermont	° On-Site Visits ° Workshops	X		° Regional "Action" Centers ° Conferences and Classroom Demonstrations to Disseminate Innovations
ED 018 509	Re-examine, Assess Curricular Objectives	° Determination of Educational Needs in one Calif. district as a Basis for Assigning Priorities to Changes in School Programs.	°Questionnaires Completed by 4000 Students, 1600 Teachers. 850 Parents	X		Programs ° Drug Education ° Family Life ° Vocational Training ° Communication Skills ° Problem-Solving, etc.

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ERIC Retrieval No.	Objective	Focus	Means of Collecting Data	Implemented? Yes	Implemented? No	Need Identi
ED 026 741	Increase Innovative Activity	° Survey of Schools with Outstanding Innovations to Determine Problems in Research-to-Development-to-Use Process	° Traveling Seminar of 120 Educators ° Conference ° Research	X		° Better M for Eval Innovati Practice ° More Fed Funding Support Implemen ° Better D ination Instrume etc.
ED 027 394	Assess Needs of Non-College Bound Students	Vocational Education	° Question-naires to ° President Students ° Graduates ° Community	X		° In-Servi Counseli ° Lay Advi Committe ° Expanded Guidance ° Curricul Instruct Innovati etc.
ED 027 633	Develop Systematic Procedures to Determine the Potential Value of a Proposed Innovation	Four of the Categories in Which Decisions are Made: Context Process Design Product	Exercise Theoretical Model (Theoretical Study Only)		X	Better Inf tion for M
ED 028 113	Improve Process of Innovative Development	University Center for a Study of Educational Innovations	Research Analysis (Theoretical Study Only)		X	Coordinate Central Fo Point for Systematic Improvemen Process

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ERIC Retrieval No.	Objective	Focus	Means of Collecting Data	Implemented? Yes	Implemented? No	Needs Identified
ED 018 865	° Characterization of Current Environment (Community, School)	Implement Improved Long-Range Planning Activities	Analysis		X	Guidelines Matrix for Planners
ED 019 737	Adoption of Innovative Practices for Program Development	Development of Model of Planned Change for Curricula	° Observation ° Exercise of Planned Change Model	X		° Initiation of Continuous Progress Plan ° Team Teaching at Secondary Level
ED 020 571	Inventory of Current Practices	Long-Range Planning	° Questionnaires ° Interviews	X		° Systematic Long-Range Planning Process ° Dissemination of Planning Skills, Techniques to Educational Administrators
ED 021 338	° "Sense" Existing Organizational Climate ° Show Schools Ways of Self-Renewal	° Development of Alternative Strategies for Planned Change	° Questionnaires ° Case Studies	X		° Formulate Set of Variables Relevant to Operation of School System ° Develop Measurement Instruments ° Effective Use of Outside Consultants

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ERIC Retrieval No.	Objectives	Focus	Means of Collecting Data	Implemented? Yes	Implemented? No	Needs Identified
ED 029 382	Establish Goals, Guidelines and Constraints for Educational Planning	Use of Computer-Based Simulation Models in Educational Planning	Exercise Model (Theoretical Study Only)		X	Development of two Models Applicable to Computer Simulation ° Descriptive ° Normative
ED 030 985	Development of Effective Techniques for Identifying Educational Needs and Formulating Them into Well-Defined Problem Statements	Representative Sample of West Coast School Districts	Critical Incident Technique	X		Participation of Trained/Experienced Leaders in Group Problem-Finding Exercises
ED 036 018	Stimulate Community Participation in Planning a New School	Provide Basic Inputs for Design of an Urban School Facility	Face-to-Face Meetings of: School Staff Community Architects	X		° Curriculum Innovation ° Improved Guidance in Education ° Community Service Coordination ° 24-hour Educational Community

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ERIC Retrieval No.	Objective	Focus	Means Collecting Data	Implemented? Yes	Implemented? No	Needs Identified
ED 038 -743 -744 -745 -747 -748 -767 -768 -769	Determine Dimensions of Educational Needs in Fresno, Calif.	° Curriculum ° Health Problems ° In-Service Training, etc.	° Brainstorming ° "Speak-Ups" ° Interviews ° Testing (to Analyze Student Achievement) ° Interagency Participation	X		° Ethnic Minority Needs ° Communication Needs ° Program Objective Needs ° Evaluation Measures ° In-Service Training ° Curriculum Level ° Vocational Education ° Adult Education, etc.
ED 038 749	Improve Quality of Educational Services	Teacher/Student Agreement on Learning Objectives	° Research ° Analysis ° Observation		X	Improved Information for Decision Making
ED 039 631	Clarification of "Semantic Smoke" Clouding Definition of Educational Need	Formal, Systematic Process	° Research ° Analysis		X	° Models for Clarifying Needs ° Hard Data
ED 039 749	Use of General Systems Theory in Problem-Solving	Comparison of Computer Systems Attributes to School System Attributes	Simulation Model (Theoretical)		X	Improvement of Schools' Production "Subsystems" via Curriculum Innovation

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ERIC Petrieval No.	Objective	Focus	Means of Collecting Data	Implemented? Yes	Implemented? No	Needs Identified
ED 041 351	Formulation of Recommendation to California State Government	Future Educational Needs	° Task Force (24 Local Professors) Interactions on Trends, Projections, etc. ° Study of Public Opinion	X		° Racial Integration ° Teacher Training ° Experimental Laboratory Schools ° Budgeting Techniques ° Improved Public Opinion ° Curriculum
ED 041 357	Determine Processes of Information Utilization and Decision Making	LEA (San Francisco)	Questionnaires	X		° Better Interpretation of Stastical Data ° Understanding Procedures for Using Information Systems ° Low Profile of Teacher Participation in Decision Making ° Lack of Time to Study Problems, Etc.
ED 041 389	Use of Cost/ Benefit Analysis in Planning	Assignments of Weights/ Priorities to Needs	Analysis (Theoretical)		X	Improve Relationship [illegible] Inputs (Nee[illegible] to Outputs (Results)

PRIORITY 2 AND PRIORITY 3 DOCUMENTS

CATEGORY 2

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Philip H. Coombs,
"Educational Planning, A Directory of Training and Research Institutions."
International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, France. 1964. ED 011244

Philip H. Coombs,
"Educational Planning - An Inventory of Major Research Needs;"
International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, France, 1965. ED 015136

Robert E. Corrigan,
"Methods-Means Selection: An Inquiry/Decision-Making Process Approach."
Paper presented at Planning Conference, California Polytechnic, Los Angeles, 1969. ED 037817

Harvard University Center for Field Studies,
"Saint Paul - A Center for Learning;"
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1967. ED 021424

Werner Z. Hirsch,
"Inventing Education for the Future:"
Science Research Associates, Inc.,
Chicago, Illinois, 1969. ED 021450

Harold Horowitz,
"Can the Behavioral Sciences Assist Planning." An Address to the 2nd Annual Conference, Society for College and University Planning, Ann Arbor, Michigan,
1967. ED 018082

S. J. Knezevich,
"Systems Analysis and Its Relationship to Educational Planning;"
Paper presented at Western Canada Administrators Conference, Banff, Alberta, October 9-11, 1969. ED 036895

A. D. Little,
"A Model for Innovation Adoption In Public School Districts: Research on the Characteristics of Selected School Systems as they Relate the Need for Appraisal, Acceptance and Use of Innovations."
Final Report,
Arthur D. Little, Inc., 1968. ED 022262

Carroll Londoner,
"A Diagnostic Procedural Model for Identifying Real Educational Needs:" 1967. ED 037675

Ernest E. McMahon
"Needs--of People and Their Communities--and the Adult Educator: A Review of the Literature of Need Determination;"
New York Syracuse University, July 1970. ED 038551

Marc H. Monheimer,
"Report of the Berkeley School Master Plan Committee to the Board of Education, Volume I:"
Berkeley Unified School District, California, 1967. ED 016754

Marc H. Monheimer,
"Studies and Recommendations of the Several Committees of the Berkeley School Master Plan Committee Supporting its Report to the Board of Education, Volume II;"
Berkeley Unified School District, Berkeley, California, 1967. ED 016755

Donald P. Sanders,
"Planning for Educational Development;"
Ohio State University, Columbus, Evaluation Center, 1967. ED 030974

Howard L. Vincent
"Selected Bibliography - Application of Economic Analysis and Operations Research to Problems in Educational Planning;"
National Center for Educational Statistics, Washington, D. C., 1966. ED 014129

Cicely Watson, Ed.,
"Educational Planning. Papers of the Invitational Conference;"
Ontario Dept. of Education, Toronto, 1967. ED 016303

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Frederick Bertolaet,
"Changing Education for a Changing World of Work, Midwestern Regional Conference on Education, Training and Employment;"
Great Cities Program for School Improvement, Chicago, Illinois, 1966. ED 019443

Helen R. Burchell, William B. Castetter,
"Educational Administration and the Improvement of Instruction;"
Pennsylvania University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1967. ED 020576

Desmond L. Cook,
"References on Network Planning in Education, Research Management, Project Selection, and Program Management;"
Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1966. ED 020580

Desmond L. Cook,
"Better Project Planning and Control Through the Use of System Analysis and Management Techniques;' District of Columbia, 1967.
ED 019729

Desmond L. Cook,
"PERT Applications In Educational Planning;"
Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1966. ED 019751

Galen N. Drewry,
"The Administrative Team and Long-Range Planning;"
Georgia University, Athens, Georgia, 1967. ED 019736

Egon G. Guba,
"Evaluation and Change in Education;"
National Institute for the Study of Educational Change, Bloomington, Indiana, 1968. ED 027601

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"Educational Planning for Economic Growth;"
California University, Berkeley, California, 1967. ED 014133

Paul M. Levasseur,
"A Study of Inter-Relationships Between Education, Manpower and Economy"
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, France, 1967. ED 021310

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"Development of a Computer Program for Use in the Analysis of Future Land, Building, and Staff Requirements in Institutions of Higher Learning - Final Report;"
Washington University, Seattle, Washington, 1967. ED 019746

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"Operation Emergence;"
Boards of Education, Los Angeles, California, 1960. ED 002676

William C. Morsch,
"A Technique for Projection of Occupational-Educational Requirements for State Educational Planning Areas;"
National Center for Educational Statistics, Washington, D. C., 1966. ED 016818

OECD,
"Mathematical Models in Educational Planning: Education and Development."
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, France, 1967. ED 024138

Raymond H. Ostrander,
"A Pilot Plan for Educational Leadership in Rhode Island. The Development of a Model for Public School District Organization in a Region of Rhode Island;"
Boston University, 1967. ED 011141

PACE Center,
"Fault Tree Analysis: A Research Tool for Educational Planning;"
Alameda County School Department, 1966. ED 029379

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"Qualitative Planning: Beyond the Numbers Game;"
California University, Berkeley, California, 1968. ED 025994

Arnold Roe,
"An Adaptive Decision Structure for Educational Systems;"
California University, Los Angeles, California, 1963. ED 020116

William G. Savard,
"A Dynamic General Planning Model for the Hawaii Department of Education;"
Hawaii State Department of Education, Honolulu, 1967. ED 020560

George S. Tracz,
"An Overview of Optimal Control Theory Applied to Educational Planning."
Paper presented at annual Meeting of the American Educ. Res. Assn., Los Angeles, California, 1969. ED 030189

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"The Financial Phase of Long-Range Planning for Public Schools - Presenting a Method for Projection;"
Butler County School Board, Pennsylvania, 1968. ED 020563